

Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge

June 8 – June 14, 2014 [Issue 5]

Photo Credit: USFWS/Tanya Lama

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Photo of the Week



Photo Credit: USFWS

A Message from Monomoy

Though the last couple weeks have been characterized by thick fogs, rain and wind, the sounds of peeping chicks and the summer vacationer are finally in the air at Monomoy! The season is in full swing, with many piping plover nests hatching, as well as our first common tern chick of the season on June 11th. Roseate tern nests continue to be found within the colony, with a 7th nest confirmed on June 11th.

We would like to thank the Americorps volunteers who joined staff on June 13th to tag horseshoe crabs. We'd also like to welcome our second visitor services intern, Emilie Seavey, who is very excited to begin developing this season's educational programs. Welcome to the Monomoy family!

2014 Field Season Update

This is a weekly synopsis of biological activities on South Monomoy, North Monomoy, and Minimoy Islands. Information within this report is subject to change. For up to date information, please contact Refuge Staff.

Bird Sightings

Double-crested cormorant
Great black-backed gull
Herring gull
Ring-billed gull
Glaucous gull
Iceland gull
Laughing gull
Bonaparte's gull
Willet
Greater yellowlegs
Lesser yellowlegs
Black-crowned night heron
American bittern
Barn swallow
White-rumped sandpiper
Least sandpiper
Short-billed dowitcher
Black tern (6/11)
Spotted sandpiper
Willow flycatcher
Whimbrel
Razorbill (6/8)

Black-bellied plover
Semipalmated plover
Semipalmated sandpiper
Sanderling
Dunlin
Snowy owl
Great egret
White-throated sparrow
Turkey vulture
Peregrine falcon
Tricolored heron
Red-winged blackbird
Common grackle
Ruddy turnstone
Wilson's plover
Red Knot
Yellow-crowned night heron
Seaside sparrow
Common eider
American black duck
Magnolia warbler

Bird Activity

Piping Plovers (PIPL)

45 active PIPL pairs were documented on the refuge at the end of the week, with 26 active nests on South Monomoy, 2 active nests on Minimoy, and 1 nest on North Monomoy Island. Nest hatching went into full swing this week with 10 nests hatching, bringing the total number of broods to 12, and a combined 38 chicks between them! Five PIPL nests were lost this week, one to gull predation, two to abandonment, and two to unknown causes due to rain washing away any potential evidence. Non-lethal predator management techniques continue to be implemented to protect nests, with six predator exclosures erected on South Monomoy as of June 7th.

American Oystercatchers (AMOY)

A total of 7 nests have hatched to date on the Refuge, with 7 nests currently being incubated, and 7 chicks documented. 3 of 4 nests on South Monomoy Island hatched, for a total of 6 chicks between 3 broods. 3 nests hatched on North Monomoy Island based on evidence and parental behavior, though the current number of chicks is unknown. One nest was lost to unknown predation, with yolk found within the nest bowl. A remaining 2 nests continue to be incubated. Lastly, one nest hatched on Minimoy Island, and 1 chick was seen. One nest failed due to unknown causes, and 4 nests continue to be incubated. Staff will continue to monitor nests and chicks.

Common Terns (COTE)

This week the first signs of starring and pipping were seen in the colony on June 10th, and the first tern chick hatched on Wednesday, June 11th. Productivity continues to be checked for all plots daily, and will switch to A and B plots this coming week as numbers of hatching chicks increase. Additionally, the first banding of chicks began on June 14th. Staff will continue to monitor for signs of predation within the colony.

Tern census numbers are in the process of being adjusted using the Lincoln Index, and may factor in changes within productivity plots between the census date and June 20th. More detailed information will be provided once it becomes available. Tern census was performed on North Monomoy Island on Sunday, June 8th, with 22 nests found along the west side, north of the corridor.

Roseate Terns (ROST)

A 2 egg ROST nest was discovered on June 8th, a 2 egg and 3 egg nest were found on June 9th, and a 1 egg nest was found on June 11th, bringing the total ROST nest count to 7! Day stints will continue, in hopes of locating additional nesting ROST pairs.

Black Skimmers (BLSK)

One BLSK was sighted on June 8th at the north tip of South Monomoy Island, while two pairs of BLSK were seen loafing on the flats off west beach outside camp on June 9th. Staff have been closely monitoring to see if the BLSK remain.

Least Terns (LETE)

Least tern census will be performed on June 16th, 18-19th along west beach, the south tip, and east beach.

Laughing Gulls (LAGU)

No new information to report.

Roseate habitat restoration Project

No new information to report.

iPlover

No new information to report.

Salt Marsh Integrity

This week, the project faced some complications while deploying levelloggers. A barologger device was successfully deployed on North Monomoy Island, though the substrate impeded levellogger installation, with sand and silt entering levellogger housings. A mesh covering was applied and glued to onto these housings to prevent sand/silt buildup during and after installation. Staff will reattempt levellogger installations this week on Morris and North Monomoy Islands.



Water levellogger installation. Photo Credit: USFWS/Yianni Laskaris

Horseshoe Crab Tagging

On Friday, June 13th, a second window of horseshoe crab tagging occurred on the north tip of South Monomoy Island. A total of 134 horseshoe crabs were tagged, bringing this season's tally to 438 crabs!

Visitor Services

With our entire visitor services staff on board, the Refuge has begun work on several educational projects. The first of which is a pollinator project, aiming to identify local pollinators and the plants they associate with around Monomoy.

Staff has also began work on three themed workshops, aiming to educate young and old visitors alike about sharks, marine mammals and horseshoe crabs. Stay tuned for more information regarding workshop activities.

Current & Upcoming Events

Horseshoe Crab Resighting	June 15, 25-26
Least Tern Census	June 16,18-19
SMI Training	June 17
Horseshoe Crab Tagging	June 27

JUNE 2014						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5